

**Mount Vernon Master Plan**  
**Open Space Committee Meeting**  
3-6-12

**Attendees:**

Anthony Cataldo, Department of Planning  
Eric Barlipp, Department of Recreation and Parks  
Andy Smith  
Oscar Gonzalez  
Gina Finelli  
Gay Armstead  
Joan Spence  
Tom Spence  
Frans A. VanWagenberg  
Peter Merles

**Meeting Minutes:**

**1. Discuss on Dog Parks**

- a. Eric presented information on dog parks throughout the City and some basic requirements that the Department looks for when evaluating locations.
  - i. Typically 10,000 square feet or more
  - ii. Land owned by Dept. Parks and Rec.
- b. The west lawn of the Monument has become the ad-hoc dog park with current mixed thoughts
- c. The most feasible dog park location, currently, is at Howard Park, the triangle parcel of land at N. Howard St. between Center St. and Druid Hill Ave.
  - i. There is currently funding to install the park
  - ii. The existing square in the center to become a plaza element and the upper area to be designated for small dogs and the lower area for large dogs
  - iii. Existing trees to be pruned for health and to provide for additional light onto the park
  - iv. Water lines and fencing to be added. Synthetic surfacing to be proposed for the site.
- d. There was discussion on what is needed for a dog park to be installed at a location.
  - i. Local/Community Support Group must be in place prior to installation
  - ii. The surfacing/park needs maintenance and the group would be committed to that maintenance.
    1. Picking-up of area
    2. Spraying down the synthetic surface

- e. Putting together a Community Dog Park Support Group (10-15 dedicated individuals) is the last hurdle to having the park installed
  - i. The Community Association should work with the Seton Hill Association in finding the dedicated persons for the group
  - ii. There has been lots of interest in a dog park but very little response when Dept. of Parks and Rec. asks for leaders.
  - iii. The guidelines for a Dog Park Support Group are online
    - 1. Group would need to establish a point/place of contact with the public (ie. Website/Facebook page/etc)
- f. The installation and success of the Howard St. Dog Park would allow for future conversations of additional dog park locations within the Mt. Vernon Area.
  - i. Potential exploration in the area around Madison and Guilford/ I-83
  - ii. Ramp area at Maryland and Oliver? (may be too small)
  - iii. Opportunities within Pearl Stone Park? (may be conflict with current stewards)
- g. Enforcement of the lease laws may be appropriate at Mt. Vernon Place after the Howard Dog park was opened to help change the current culture of people using the west lawn as an impromptu dog park.

## **2. Open Space Network Ideas**

- a. Mt. Vernon has some great, established open spaces- but few of them and they are around the perimeter of the neighborhood.
- b. The streetscape, therefore, provides the extension of/connection to Open Space network.
- c. Main goal outlined was maintaining the streetscapes/open spaces that exist and enhancing the individual properties participation
  - i. Adopt a Block programs
    - 1. How can we expand participation?
    - 2. Can the Association provide incentives/prizes/money throughout the year for blocks to participate
    - 3. How do you continue to get property owners involved?
    - 4. How do you reach landlords for participation?
  - ii. Perhaps designating a block captain program to increase awareness and participation
  - iii. Individuals taking charge of tree wells and planters
  - iv. Work to create a culture in Mt. Vernon of street/block pride
    - 1. Bloom your block programs
    - 2. Ideas get more first time homeowners involved?

## **3. Survey questions**

- a. What do people want to get out of their open space?
  - i. Specific needs or types of spaces?
- b. How willing are you to get involved with programs?
  - i. Only your property

- ii. Programs/projects on your block
- iii. Neighborhood wide projects
- iv. Willing to commit time or money?

**4. Next steps**

- a. Look to 2004 Midtown Belvedere streetscape report for goals and applicable information to be part of the open space recommendations for the Mt. Vernon Master Plan.

**5. Schedule next Committee meeting**

- a. Tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30pm
  - i. Notification will be sent via email to Open Space Committee members
- b. Agenda items
  - i. Review draft goals/recommendations for Open Space based on this meeting and the 2004 recommendations.